

Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

April 1, 2025

Voting Members Present: John Leafgren, Karin Nolan, Ally Roof, Dereka Rushbrook, Christopher Sanderson, Caleb Simmons, Amanda Sokan, Travis Spence, Joost Van Haren, Jeremy Vetter

Non-voting Members Present: Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, Cassidy Salazar, Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

UGC Chair Joost Van Haren called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. A quorum was established with 10 voting members.

I. Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 2/25/2025

Christopher Sanderson motioned to accept the meeting minutes from 2/25/2025. John Leafgren seconded the motion. The motion passed with 9 votes in favor and 1 abstention.

II. Action Items

A. General Education Policies

Presenters: Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

The subcommittee was given an overview of the proposed changes to general education policies and UWGEC's response to the proposal:

- Foundations policies: Each foundation category was given a baseline requirement so that once a student completes a general education course, it would not be undone by the student changing their major or degree type. This builds off recent updates made to the Transfer Credit policy, so that a completed AGEC or bachelor's degree is honored in full.
 - Programs requiring additional foundations coursework in addition to the baseline requirement would reclassify that coursework as major requirements.
 - Several colleges have asked for exceptions in recent years, similar to the exception for Engineering students in the current policy. The policy update would satisfy those requests without having to single out individual colleges.
 - A taskforce met for several months to review and finalize recommendations.
- These changes involve significant work across all majors to ensure the changes are made effectively. If approved this Spring, the policies would take effect Fall 2026.
 - A formal advisory group has been requested to identify implementation concerns.

- UWGEC has only approved the removal of attributes as graduation requirements, and the renaming of the Diversity and Equity Attribute (though they proposed an alternative name, “Power and Difference”).
- Civic Learning was removed from the proposal because it had not yet been finalized. Some members felt that several of the updates suggested could be held and included at the time that Civic Learning goes through the faculty governance in fall 2025.

Discussion continued:

- There was concern from UWGEC that the proposal was moving forward too quickly without sufficient time to review. However, if no action was taken, attributes would become graduation requirements beginning Fall 2026.
 - Other governance groups, like the Faculty Senate, would likely feel similarly about wanting more time to review the proposal. As such, the proposal should be sent to Faculty Senate right away for the best chance of consideration.
- UWGEC had the following concerns regarding the foundations policies:
 - Writing: The proposal references writing emphasis courses required in the major, which could be misconstrued as part of General Education due to its inclusion in the Foundation policy.
 - Second language: because the university does not accept other high school coursework as credit, some members found it unprecedented to do so with second language. The proposal did not have a section outlining the importance of the requirement and the skills students will acquire, as the other foundations did.
 - Math: the proposed policy was brief compared to the other foundations, not listing out coursework like the writing policy or pathways for completion like the second language requirement. There was not a taskforce to review this proposal, so it has had seemingly less consideration. If implemented in Fall 2026, programs would have a very brief window to make appropriate changes to their requirements.
- The Math department had been included in the discussion around this policy update.
- A purpose statement could be added into the Second Language requirement policy to address concerns around the policy being parallel with the other foundations. The Math requirement proposal, though brief, does include this language already.
- What was the motivation to update the foundation policies immediately, if civic learning wasn’t included in the proposal?
 - If updating the foundations policies, it should be done simultaneously so it would be clear to students and advisors which catalog year all changes took effect. By waiting to implement these changes in 2027, another cohort of ~10,000 students would miss the opportunity to have simplified General Education requirements. Additionally, colleges have

been requesting exception to the second language policy for years already.

- One representative reported that their department was concerned how substitutions for foundation and general education coursework would be handled. The proposal mentioned that this responsibility would be taken up by the Office of Undergraduate Education; what would that mean for keeping consistency across units?
 - Though new for the institution, it was fairly common at other institutions for departments to work with one centralized department that determined substitutions and exceptions. Doing so could improve standardization across what courses may and may not be treated as exceptions.
 - For additional coursework required at the major-level (such as math), the department would still be responsible for making the determination on what substitutions are allowed.
- Under the current policy, different majors didn't have to accept substitutions that a previous major allowed for a student. When changing majors, the student's new department could deny the substitutions, thereby unsatisfying the requirement. To ensure equity, there needed to be a baseline requirement across all majors, and let majors require additional coursework if needed.
 - In the above scenario, a student who completed additional math coursework required by a major could still have that coursework rejected if switching majors.
- While it made sense to let the department decide the major-specific requirements, it could be risky to let the department decide how exceptions would be handled. It could introduce a competition between majors.
 - Something else the implementation taskforce could be responsible for would developing clear guidelines on substitutions and exceptions.
- Members agreed an implementation taskforce would be necessary.
- Advising was currently in the process of auditing exceptions made from the past 5 years to determine who was making the exceptions, when, and whether it was for the major or for general education requirements.
- In the second language requirement proposal, what all would qualify as additional methods for satisfying the requirement? For example, students in the School of Music took coursework on diction to be able to read music or literature that was in Italian, French, Latin, and/or German. Some students participate in opera performances in other languages. Could any of those scenarios satisfy the requirement? What would the guidelines be?
- Part of the work ahead for the implementation taskforce would be to identify a shared governance body that would determine what satisfied multilingual learning experiences. Programs could submit proposals for coursework or experiences that they believed should satisfy the requirement. These proposals would be reviewed by a shared governance body and approved or denied. It

would be made clear to students prior to beginning an experience whether or not it would satisfy the second language requirement.

- Courses like diction were not taken until a student's junior or senior year; does that mean it could potentially be too late for students to use that as a multilingual learning experience?
 - If a pathway has not been approved yet to meet the requirement, the student's advisor would have guided the student to have completed the requirement through other means. If diction became approved as a pathway, then advising would let appropriate students know they could hold off on taking a second language to later satisfy it through diction.
 - If a student had a multilingual learning experience approved through one program and then changed their major, it would still satisfy the GE requirement, under the proposed policy.
 - A student who satisfied the general education second language requirement for their program and then switched to a BA degree would still have satisfied the base GE requirement, but would need to satisfy the additional BA requirement (by taking a fourth semester of a second language, two semesters of a different language, or another multilingual learning experience, etc.).
- How would we quantify what counts as a multilingual learning experience? In the case of study abroad, would it be dependent on second language acquisition, or on cultural immersion? If unchecked, it could be difficult to establish a baseline of what satisfied the requirement.
 - The second language taskforce had developed learning outcomes for the requirement. These learning outcomes could be used to help measure whether a proposed multilingual experience satisfied the requirement.
- Language acquisition was important to several members on the taskforce, so criteria would likely be based on whether the experience would include significant engagement with a second language.
 - It was likely that not all study abroad programs would satisfy the requirement – only programs that include the use of language would count.
- Conversation turned to the attribute policy. While agreeing a name change for the Diversity and Equity attribute would be beneficial, UWGEC had countered the proposed name (Understanding and Valuing Differences) with "Power and Difference." UWGEC felt that "Understanding and Valuing Differences" went too far in watering down the course material and was missing a key element of the course content: power.
- One subcommittee member noted that if the goal of renaming the attribute was to keep a target off of faculty, then "Power and Difference" might be more likely to draw attention. "Understanding and Valuing Differences" was less inflammatory.

- Another subcommittee member felt that if the name of the attribute was meant to convey skill development, “Power and Difference” didn’t inform that the students were learning a skill. They suggested “Understanding Multiple Human Experiences” as an alternative name.
- Could the attribute’s definition be adjusted to imply that the coursework addressed power relations, even if not using those exact words?
- How urgent was the revision to the Diversity and Equity attribute?
 - This update was largely suggested because a policy proposal was already in progress. It was not a required change for curriculum, but meant as an assurance for faculty. The language could be left as-is for now while only the statement about requiring attributes was removed.
- If ABOR was likely going to change the language around the Diversity and Equity attribute, should the University hold off on renaming the attribute to instead match whatever ABOR later decided on?
- The subcommittee had the option of voting on the proposal contingent on UWGEC’s approval, but opted to wait and see what UWGEC’s official recommendation was.

Ally Roof moved to approve the removal of attributes as graduation requirements, and Amanda Soka seconded the motion. The motion passed with 10 votes in favor. UWGEC will review the policy proposal packet again at their April 9 meeting, and the proposal will return to the subcommittee for e-vote if necessary.

B. Repeating a Course & Grading for Repeated Courses

Presenter: Joost Van Haren

Due to time constraints and because no objection was raised, the committee proceeded immediately to voting on the policy proposal.

Christopher Sanderson moved to approve the policy proposal, and Dereka Rushbrook seconded the motion. The motion passed with 10 votes in favor.

The meeting was officially adjourned at 5:07 PM. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on April 29, 2025.

Respectfully submitted by Cassidy Salazar, 4/11/2025